

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 024-2004



To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: January 26, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature of Jorge M. Gonzalez.

Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide the Mayor and Commission with an update describing some of the areas the administration focused on during the weeks of January 12 and 19, 2004:

Tourism and Cultural Development – On January 12, staff met with representatives from ERA, the City's consultant, to discuss the draft report prepared by ERA. The discussion focused on reviewing and assessing the Greater Miami Convention & Visitor's Bureau (GMCVB) governance, structure, processes and overall operations; making recommendations as to what type of model/structure should exist to enhance the City of Miami Beach's tourism and convention industries; and comparing and providing a comprehensive report on GMCVB operations relative to industry standards. A further refinement of the draft is anticipated by the end of the month and will be shared with the City Commission and discussed at the next Finance Committee.

Nightlife Industry Task Force (NITE) – Representatives from the NITE met on January 13 and requested a workshop with the City Commission to discuss a holistic view of entertainment and nightlife issues affecting the City. This opportunity will be explored further.

Fire Department - An accreditation peer assessment team came to Miami Beach on January 15 to begin their assessment of the Miami Beach Fire Department. The assessment process continued through January 18. At the conclusion of the meetings, the assessment team advised that the Miami Beach Fire Department will be recommended for full Accreditation. The recommendation will be reviewed by the full *Commission on Fire Accreditation International* for final approval at the International Association of Fire Chiefs conference in New Orleans in August of this year. This recognition is particularly significant because of the more than 10,000 fire departments in the U.S. there are only 81 that have received accreditation. There are also less than 10 accredited fire departments in the state of Florida, and only two in Miami-Dade County (Coral Gables and Key Biscayne). An LTC with additional details will be sent to each of you shortly.

Potamkin Site – Staff met with representatives from Potamkin to continue discussing issues relative to the proposed project, with particular emphasis on the parking garage revenue and expense operations.

Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club – I had an opportunity to meet with the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club on January 20 and update members on several initiatives the City is working on as well as answer questions various participants had about different issues affecting the City.

Film & Print - Telemundo's "Amor Descarado" and Univision's "Angel Rebelde" continue their telenovella productions throughout the City. Epoch films is producing an NFL commercial here in Miami Beach to air during the Superbowl, featuring many known athletes. Top selling hip-hop artists G-Unit and 50-Cent, fresh off an appearance on Saturday Night Live, filmed a video this week at B.E.D. Roselyn Sanchez filmed a music video last week at Nikki Beach, South Pointe Beach and the suite at the Pelican Hotel. CSI:Miami was in the area this past week filming and the production crew will be back here for an extended period throughout the months of March and April. Golden Globe nominated new series "Nip/ Tuck" will soon be in production for season two, which includes more location work here in Miami Beach.

Major Events Planning (MEP) – Staff worked throughout the past two weeks to ensure that various special events held on Miami Beach were successful. The Budweiser Clydesdales were in South Beach for the first time and held an event on January 10. The Miami Design Preservation League held their 27th annual Art Deco Weekend event from January 16 – 19. Upcoming events include the Miami International Film Festival which will hold several events here on Miami Beach from January 30 – February 7. The 2nd annual Miami Tropical Marathon which will be held on February 1. In its inaugural year the race attracted over 5, 000 runners and generated very positive press for the area. The industry proclaimed the race as the most successful "new" race of 2003. The Ryan Nolan 5K Run/Walk will be produced by the Miami Beach Police Department to benefit the Ryan's Hope Foundation. The foundation was created to raise awareness of the fight against Spinal Muscular Atrophy. FAB FEST, a beer, wine and food festival, will be held at Lummus Park from February 6-7. That same weekend, the North Beach Development Corporation will be producing the 30th annual Miami Beach Festival of the Arts. Preparations for the Boat Show are already underway, with the event taking place from February 12-17. Volleypalooza, a volleyball tournament will be held from February 21-22 and the Big Shot Volleyball tournament from February 28-29. Finally, staff is working with representatives from the South Beach Food & Wine Festival on this year's event which is scheduled to take place throughout the City from March 5-7.

Organizational Development – As part of my ongoing organizational development efforts, I invited the Neighborhoods Services Department to join me for a brown bag lunch on January 20 to talk about issues that may be important to staff and the Department. My goal is to meet with all City Departments in this informal setting to further open the lines of communication and make sure that staff at all levels have an opportunity to share information with me that may be important to them.

Fleet Management - Held its annual business meeting on January 21. All Fleet staff participated along with myself and Assistant City Manager Bob Middaugh. Presentations were made by the City's Risk Management Division and the Accident Investigation Unit (AIU) of the Police Department. The theme was customer service, accidents and accident reconstruction and the focus was on quality of workmanship and safety. Several Fleet employees also had the opportunity to present to co-workers information about their jobs and the challenges they face each day. The Fleet and Citywide budgets were discussed so that all staff understand the process involved. Other items discussed were performance indicators for Fleet and the increase of productivity through process improvement. These key elements were identified to help employees focus on the division's goals and objectives for the current year.

Employee Celebrations – Employee led committees are working on several upcoming celebrations, including our annual Black History Month luncheon celebration scheduled for February 27 and our annual employee picnic scheduled for March 27. This year's employee picnic will also serve as the event where the employees celebrate the City's 89th birthday, which takes place on March 26.

Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) – The Board of Directors of the GMCVB met on January 20 at the Loews Hotel to discuss several items. The Board of Directors voted to accept the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Building Committee to keep the Bureau headquarters in their current location at 701 Brickell Avenue and not relocate to Miami Beach. An LTC with additional details was sent to each of you on January 21.

Capital Improvement Projects – The Ice Rink at the Scott Rakow Youth Center was formally opened at a ribbon cutting ceremony on January 13, an event many of you were able to attend. The start of the La Gorce/ Pine Tree Median Enhancement Project began last week. The contractor is proceeding to excavate and install new irrigation lines and landscaping as well as conduit for future up lighting. There are a total of 19 island medians to be renovated. The contractor began on the north end of Pine Tree Drive and is presently completing remaining work on Pine Tree Drive. Once these medians are completed, they will begin the same process on La Gorce Drive, starting at 52nd Street and moving north. The restart of the 42nd Street Streetscape Project also began with the addition of the water main has begun. This work will commence on the west end of 42nd Street (Prairie Avenue) and move east. The adjacent elementary school has been notified as have representatives of the Homeowner's Association. The Marseille Drive Streetscape Project has reached substantial completion with only a few punch list items still to be addressed. This multi-family neighborhood project was conceived in 1995 grew in scope and funding and construction finally began early in 2003. The Project includes infrastructure and above ground improvements to Marseille Drive from Bay Drive to Rue Notre Dame; Rue Versailles, from Marseille Drive to Normandy Drive; and Rue Notre Dame, from Marseille Drive to Normandy Drive.

Office of Budget and Performance Improvement – This new area, consisting of the Office of Budget and Management, Internal Audit, Organizational Development and Grants Management continue to make progress in coming together and have been working on their vision, mission and goals in order to be prepared to undertake the City's budget process and implement various performance improvement initiatives. In addition, I have been meeting with the Office Director in the planning and development of this year's budget preparations.

South Beach AIDS Project – After a meeting with Kevin Garrity, Executive Director of the South Beach AIDS Project, our Office of Community Services will partner with his organization to provide an in-service training for our Homeless Outreach team on AIDS/transgender issues as well as the use of his agency as a resource for HIV positive homeless clients. The in-service training will be conducted on March 8, 2004.

Union Negotiations – Staff and I continued to meet with representatives from all the City Unions to further discuss the ongoing negotiations. Progress is being made on all fronts and details will be shared with each of you.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to let me know.

JMG/vi

Electronic Copy: Leadership Team

F:\CMGR\ALL\LTC04\Weekly Update\January 23.doc